



# State of South Carolina

## Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD  
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267  
COLUMBIA 29211

May 6, 2009

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Post Office Box 11867  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I hereby veto and return without my approval H. 3776, R. 41. This veto is based upon our belief that H. 3776, R. 41 is unconstitutional.

The purpose of this legislation is to allow members of a Dorchester County governing board or commission to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred inside the county. Current law allows for reimbursement by members of a governing board or commission if they travel *outside* of the county. As a result, this legislation is crafted to contradict a general statewide law and is specific to only one county.

This administration has long supported the notion of home rule – that the office closest to the people is generally in the best position to represent the will of a community. It has always been our position that local perspective should not be thwarted by others in government – whether in Columbia or Washington. For this reason we have let several pieces of legislation, whose content we disagreed with, become law because we recognized the decision on that content should be made at the local level – even if we happened to disagree with those decisions.

Equally as important, we have vetoed local legislation aimed to the benefit of a single county and in direct conflict with a statewide law. If the General Assembly's wish is to modify existing law so that *all* locally-appointed board and commission members can recoup expenses incurred inside the county, our administration can then be consistent in taking a very different look at this idea. This not being the case, I am compelled to veto this bill based on our belief that it is unconstitutional.

Such acts are in violation of Article VIII, Section 7, of the Constitution of the State of South Carolina, which provides that "[n]o laws for a specific county shall be enacted." Acts similar to H. 3776, R. 41, have been struck down by the South Carolina Supreme Court as violative of Article VIII, Section 7.

For this reason, I am vetoing and returning H. 3776, R. 41, to you without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Sanford", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Sanford